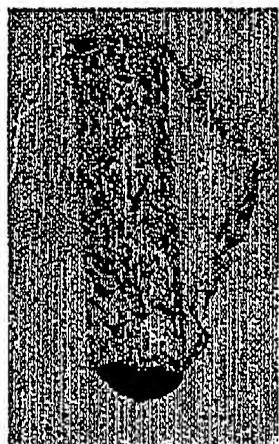


It's HER bag, baby!



Carly and her yoga bags were a hit at the Designers Ball held on June 11 in NYC

While most girls at the age of sixteen are planning what to wear to the prom or on their first date, Carly Uretzky-Miller is choosing fabric patterns for her handmade yoga bags. This is no ordinary 16 year old. Carly is a well-spoken, intelligent, beautiful young woman whose light beams from within her. I was so impressed when sitting with this soon to be 17 year-old, talking about her established business, dreams of becoming an actress, and how she embraces her family and her heritage. It's not hard to see that whatever this girl touches will turn to gold.

So what is a yoga bag? Nowadays, it seems that everyone and their grandmother is learning yoga and quickly discovering the benefits through whatever method they choose. While not all yoga is the same, the yoga mat is. The mat is made of a sticky plastic that conveniently rolls up for storage. While in my first yoga lesson, I discovered that it is not the easiest practice; however, carrying the mat was the trickiest. As my boyfriend says, "Do you really need another bag?" He'll never understand!

Truth is, everyone needs a yoga bag! What a great investment for yourself. Think about it this way: when you practice yoga, your mat is your personal space. It should be sacred and taken care of, not just tossed in the back of the car! Germs can build up easily on the sticky surface. Carly's yoga bag protects your mat when it is not in use. Then sling it over your shoulder to transport your mat to and from yoga class, and toss it in the back of your car afterwards (we know you will!).

So now that we have covered what the yoga bag is all about, let's get back to the designer! Not anyone comes up with the idea to make a great accessory for yoga. Carly was introduced to yoga methods and teaching by her parents. Her mother is a Registered Yoga Teacher with the Yoga Alliance and has practiced for over 30 years. Her father also practices yoga and has a background in acting. One year for Hannukah, Carly wanted to make her parents bags for their yoga mats. She cut the patterns, chose the fabric and still to this day her parents are sporting their original yoga bags. Knowing that this was a great idea, Carly decided to move it up a notch by seeking help from her grandmother, a seamstress. She had learned how to crochet from her high school Hebrew language teacher, Mira Berkowitz; adding the crocheted bottom to each bag allowed air in so the mat would have the proper ventilation during storage.



While on a trip to Cape May, Carly and her family started to show the bags to boutiques and yoga studios for sale. As the idea picked up, lessons quickly followed. "I have learned so much about business and sales through this venture," says Uretzky-Miller. She loves going to conferences, setting up exhibitor tables, and showing her product in person while talking to people. Eventually, she set up a website www.earthspirityogabags.com, where you can choose from 18 fabrics that change often (chances are, you won't see anyone else carrying your Earthspirit yoga bag), order conveniently online and have your yoga bag shipped directly to you.

So what's in the future for this young entrepreneur? Currently, Carly attends the Howell High School in the Performing Arts Program and lives in Marlboro. Studying an equal balance of acting and academics, writing and performing are her passions. Drama with teacher Steven Kazakoff is shaping her experiences. When I ask her about the future of the business she replies, like many high school students, "I want to go to college and study liberal arts." In Carly's case, she is not interested in choosing a "major," but in choosing a college that encourages her to explore everything and create her own curriculum such as Sarah Lawrence, Hampshire College, Bard, and Oberlin. Sounds about right for Carly.

While we wish her well, we won't be surprised to hear of her success with her visionary designs. Already, she has been featured in *Teen People* and *Lifetime Magazine*. MTV thought that her bags would be great gifts to the stars and also received much applause at the Designer's Ball in NYC which was held on June 11, 2003, where proceeds went to the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

For more information on Carly and her yoga bags, you can log onto her website at www.earthspirityogabags.com or call her at 732-431-4488. We are so thrilled for her success and to be able to meet such a great woman making her way in the world.